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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/063.998	06/03/2002	Douglas E. Stern	GEMS8081.124	7196
27061	7590	04/07/2005	EXAMINER	
ZIOLKOWSKI PATENT SOLUTIONS GROUP, SC (GEMS)			NGUYEN, CINDY	
14135 NORTH CEDARBURG ROAD				
MEQUON, WI 53097			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2161	

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/063,998	STERN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Cindy Nguyen	2171	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

**A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.**

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 June 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

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## **DETAILED ACTION**

This is in response to amendments filed 03/07/05.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

#### **1. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103**

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**2. Claims 1, 5, 8-11, 16 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith et al. (U.S 6594673) (Smith) in view of San Andres et al. (US 5956489) (San).**

Regarding claim 1, Smith discloses: A method of cross-pollinating (cross-post) postings across more than one computerized bulletin board comprising the steps of: automatically determining at least one topic of relevance of a post to a computerized bulletin board (col. 2, lines 11-17, Smith);

Automatically determining one or more other computerized bulletin boards related to the at least one topic of relevance (col. 6, lines 20-59, Smith); and

However, Smith didn't disclose: automatically placing a copy of the post on each of the one or more other computerized bulletin boards related to the at least one topic of relevance. On the other hand, San discloses: placing a copy of the post on each of the one or more other computerized bulletin boards related to the at least one topic of relevance (col. 15, lines 36-62, San). Thus, at the time invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to include the steps for placing a copy of the post on each of the one or more other computerized bulletin boards related to the at least one topic of relevance in the system of Smith as taught by San. The motivation being to enable the system replicate message postings so that all the servers of the relevant service group in the Bulletin boards system service group contain like message data so the users see the postings without requiring the search (col. 15, lines 36-62, San) .

Regarding claim 5, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Smith/San discloses: wherein the computerized bulletin board is related to general topics of relevance and the one or more other computerized bulletin boards are related to specific topics of relevance (col. 7, lines 57 to col. 8, lines 10, Smith).

Regarding claim 8, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. In addition, Smith/San discloses: further comprising the

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step of determining if the post relates to a thread of previous posts on the computerized bulletin board and, if so, automatically placing the post in the thread (col. 5, lines 54-61, Smith).

Regarding claim 9, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 8. In addition, Smith/San discloses: further comprising the step of automatically creating a new thread on the computerized bulletin board related to the at least one topic of relevance (col. 6, lines 18-32, Smith).

Regarding claim 10, Smith/San discloses: A computer readable storage medium having a computer program for content tagging posts to computerized bulletin boards and representing a set of instructions that when executed by a computer causes the computer to: detect a user post to a general computerized bulletin board (col. 5, lines 62 to col. 6, lines 3, Smith); determine one or more specific topics of relevance of the user post (col. 4, lines 32-46, Smith); determine one or more specific computerized bulletin boards dedicated to the one or more specific topics of relevance (col. 6, lines 48-59, Smith); and place a copy of the user post on each of the one or more specific computerized bulletin boards (col. 6, lines 18-33, Smith).

Regarding claim 11, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 10. In addition, Smith/San discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to search the user post for one or more keywords indicative of the one or more specific topics of relevance to which the user post refers (col. 7, lines 57 to col. 8, lines 10, Smith).

Regarding claim 13, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 10. In addition, Smith/San discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to determine an author of the post and based on the determined author place a copy of the post to one or more specific computerized bulletin boards dedicated to one or more fields of interest of the author (col. 7, lines 34-53, Smith).

Regarding claim 16, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 10. In addition, Smith/San discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to automatically generate a new thread on a specific computerized bulletin board dedicated to a specific topic of relevance of the user post (col. 6, lines 18-32, Smith).

Regarding claim 22, Smith/San discloses: A computerized system of networked bulletin boards to facilitate discussion of a number of topics of interest comprising:

- a set of content-specific bulletin boards wherein each content-specific bulletin board is dedicated to a specific topic of interest (col. 5, lines 54-61, Smith);

- a content-general bulletin board dedicated to a general topic interest related to the specific topics of interest (col. 6, lines 18-34, Smith);

- at least one GUI (180, fig. 10, Smith) having a hyperlink thereon corresponding to at least one of the content-specific bulletin boards and the content-general bulletin board (col. 9, lines 1-40, Smith); and
- a computer having: means to display the at least one GUI (180, fig. 10, Smith);

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means to detect a user post associated with at least one topic of interest (col. 5, lines 62 to col. 6, lines 3, Smith);

means to determine at least one of a specific topic of interest and a general topic of interest of the user post (col. 5, lines 43-53, Smith); and

means to automatically place a copy of the user post on each content-specific bulletin board to which the post relates and on the content-general bulletin board (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).

**3. Claims 2- 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith et al. (U.S 6594673) (Smith) in view of San Andres et al. (US 5956489) (San) and further in view of Knight et al. (US 6721748) (Knight).**

Regarding claim 2, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 1. However, Smith/San didn't disclose: further comprising the step of searching the post for one or more keywords indicative of the at least one topic of relevance. On the other hand, Knight discloses: further comprising the step of searching the post for one or more keywords indicative of the at least one topic of relevance (col. 20, lines 15-54, Knight). Thus, at the time invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to include the step of searching the post for one or more keywords indicative of the at least one topic of relevance in the system of Smith as taught by Knight. The motivation being to enable the user to search for posts directly related to specific topics (col. 20, lines 15-54, Knight).

Regarding claim 3, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 2. In addition, Smith/San/Knight discloses: further comprising the step of accessing a smart database and determining therefrom terms related to the one or more keywords (col. 4, lines 32-46, Smith).

Regarding claim 4, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 2. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: further comprising the step of matching the one or more keywords with one or more computerized bulletin board topic identifiers to determine an appropriate computerized bulletin board to place a copy of the post (col. 16, lines 25-39, Knight).

Regarding claim 6, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 5. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: further comprising the step of scanning text of the post to the computerized bulletin board related to general topics of relevance for keywords referencing one or more specific topics of relevance (col. 13, lines 23-40, Knight) and automatically placing a copy of the post on each of the one or more other computerized bulletin boards related to the one or more specific topics of relevance (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).

Regarding claim 7, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 6. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: further comprising the step of automatically placing a copy of a post to a computerized bulletin board related to a specific topic of relevance on the computerized bulletin board dedicated to general topics of relevance (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).



Regarding claim 12, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 11. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to scan at least text in a subject identifier and text in a body of the user post to find the one or more keywords indicative of the one or more specific topics of relevance (col. 13, lines 27-40, Knight).

Regarding claim 14, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 13. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to determine the one or more fields of interest of the author from a look-up table containing data correlating author information with field-of-interest information (col. 15, lines 64 to col. 14, lines 15, Knight).

Regarding claim 15, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 10. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: wherein the set of instructions further causes the computer to automatically place the user post in a thread dedicated to a specific topic of relevance on the one or more specific computerized bulletin boards (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).

Regarding claim 17, Smith//San/Knight discloses: a computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave and representing a set of instructions which, when executed by at least one processor, causes the at least one processor to integrate a post with one or more computerized bulletin boards by:

detecting a user selection of a button (col. 9, lines 1-23, Smith);

determining another topic of interest to which the post is relevant (col. 4, lines 32-46, Smith); and

automatically placing a copy of the post on another computerized bulletin board related to the another topic of interest (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).

receiving a post relevant to a topic of interest associated with the button selected (col. 13, lines 17-40, Knight); placing the post on a computerized bulletin board dedicated to the topic of interest (col. 15, lines 36-62, San). On the other hand, Hoffer discloses: receiving a post relevant to a topic of interest associated with the button selected (col. 13, lines 62 to col. 14, lines 7, Hoffer); placing the post on a computerized bulletin board dedicated to the topic of interest (col. 15, lines 36-62, San);

displaying a GUI having thereon one or more buttons, wherein each button is associated with a topic of interest (col. 13, lines 17-40, Knight); displaying a GUI having thereon one or more buttons, wherein each button is associated with a topic of interest (col. 13, lines 40-51, Knight).

Regarding claim 18, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 17. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: further causing the act of determining at least one subtopic of interest of the user post (col. 5, lines 43-61, Smith).

Regarding claim 19, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 18. In addition, Smith//San/Knight discloses: further causing the act of assigning the post to a thread of previous posts discussing a subtopic of interest (col. 6, lines 48-59, Smith).

Regarding claim 20, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 18. In addition, Smith//San/Knight didn't disclose: further causing the act of generating a new thread of discussion related to a subtopic of interest if there is not an existing thread of discussion dedicated to the subtopic of interest (col. 10, lines 40-50, Knight).

Regarding claim 21, all the limitations of this claim have been noted in the rejection of claim 17. In addition, Smith//San/Knight didn't disclose: further causing the act of detecting a user post directly to a computerized bulletin board dedicated to a topic of interest and automatically placing a copy of the user post directly to another computerized bulletin board dedicated to another topic of interest to which the user post directly to the computerized bulletin board relates (col. 15, lines 36-62, San).


#### **4. Contact Information**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cindy Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-4025. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic can be reached on 571-272-4023. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications and 703-872-9306 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

  
Cindy Nguyen  
March 24, 2005

  
**FRANTZ COBY**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**